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SUBJECT: DARFUR: DEMOCRATIC POPULAR FRONT SEEKS INVITE TO
LIBYA TALKS

REF: A. CAIRO 2711

1B. BERMAN-LARSON 9/20/2007 E-MAIL

11. (SBU) In an introductory meeting with poloff on September 20, Cairo-based Siddique Ander and Osama Mohamed El Hassan, President and Secretary General, respectively, of the Democratic Popular Front (DPF), asked for USG pressure on the UN and AU to get the DPF invited to the planned October 27 peace talks in Libya. DPF representation is essential, claim Ander and El Hassan, as the DPF has the support of "all the non-janjaweed Arab tribes" in Darfur, which are marginalized by the GOS, and not represented by the other Darfur rebel factions. Ander and El Hassan opined that by splintering into many different factions, the other rebel groups, particularly the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM), will be over-represented at the talks, and potentially able to claim an unfairly large portion of wealth and power sharing in any deal with the GOS.

12. (SBU) The humanitarian situation in Darfur is the DPF's top concern, Ander and El Hassan said, and along these lines they repeated their offer of military "assistance" as the UN/AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) prepares to deploy to Darfur (ref A). They asserted that the DPF has "10,000 fighters" on the ground that could assist UNAMID during the deployment process, to guarantee security on the ground and ensure that the GOS does not undermine deployment.

13. (SBU) Ander and El Hassan were accompanied by Jalal Mahmoud, based in Philadelphia and currently setting up a DPF office there. This office will help the DPF increase ties with the USG and increase the DPF's media visibility, Mahmoud said. All three expressed frustrations that the DPF receives almost non-existent coverage in international media (with the exception of one military operation in August, per reftel), and were keen for the USG to assist with their public relations (NFI).

14. (SBU) Comment: The DPF is clearly looking to grab as much influence as possible in any final settlement in Darfur. Per ref B e-mail exchange with Embassy Khartoum, we understand that the DPF has made a similar request to the UN and AU, with no substantive response. DPF leaders' requests for USG support and organizational wherewithal seem little different than those of Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and SLM faction leaders in Cairo. At this point, we have scant other information to judge the DPF's level of support or capabilities in Darfur. End comment.

JONES